



The President's Daily Brief

23 November 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi's reaction to the US air strikes is discussed on Page 1.

Satellite photography indicates that Communist China's guided missile plant is in full-scale production. (Page 2)

In Laos, Communist forces have overrun the principal government bases on the Bolovens Plateau. (Page 3)

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South Vietnam

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(Page 4)

Libya

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Egypt and Sudan.

(Page 5)

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Guinea

(Page 6)

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In West Germany, the Free Democrats' success in a state election yesterday gives a boost to the central government coalition. (Page 7)

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NORTH VIETNAM

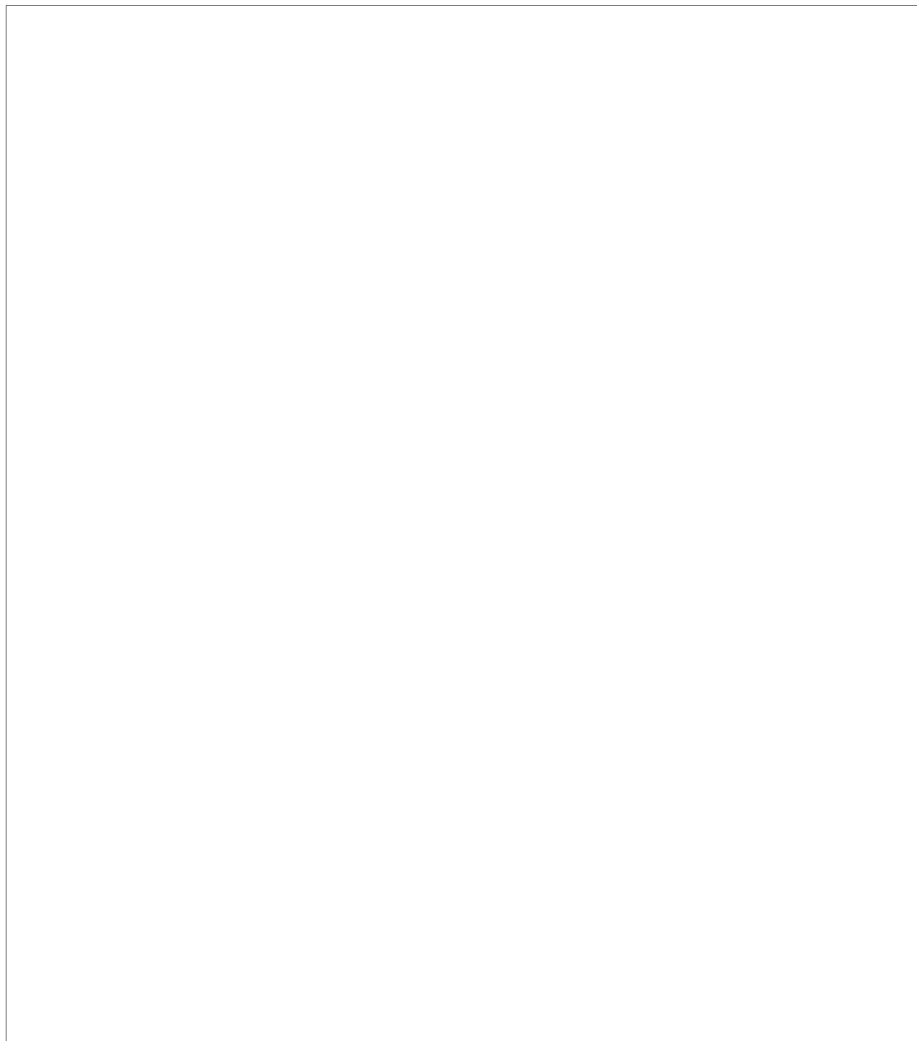
In a pair of angrily worded communiqués, Hanoi's Foreign Ministry and its delegation at the Paris talks have claimed that the air raids over the week-end violated a US pledge to halt all bombing of the North and were a "brazen provocation" and "extremely serious act of war" that would gravely affect the Paris talks. The statements reassert Hanoi's long-standing position that no "understanding" exists that allows uncontested US aerial reconnaissance over the North. The communiqués end with a "severe warning" against any further encroachments of North Vietnamese territory.

Hanoi contends that in addition to hitting targets south of the 19th parallel, US aircraft struck targets in North Vietnam's heartland including a suburb of Hanoi, the general Haiphong area, and a few populous, agricultural provinces near the capital.

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Aside from leaving an impression that a deeper freeze in Paris is in store, the Communists have not revealed what their next move will be. Following a series of US air strikes against the North last May, Hanoi talked tough for a time and skipped one of the weekly plenary sessions in Paris. At a press conference in Paris on Saturday a North Vietnamese spokesman hinted that Hanoi expected the talks to go on.

The Communists could also retaliate in South Vietnam with rocket attacks against a major city or two or with increased activity around the Demilitarized Zone. In this way, Hanoi would underscore its contention that the US had breached its "pledge" of 1968 to refrain from bombing the North and that Communist forces in the South are not constrained by any kind of "understanding."

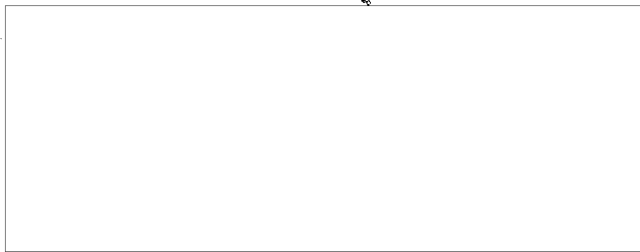


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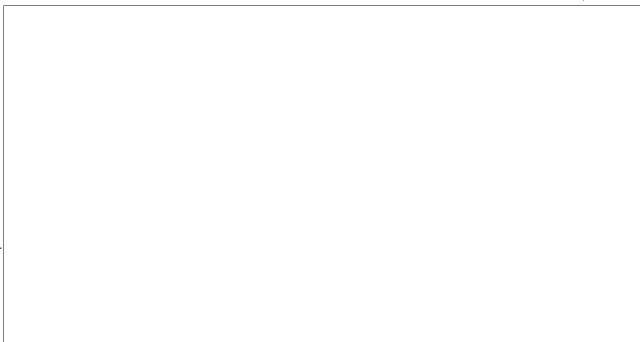
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COMMUNIST CHINA

Satellite photography of the Nan-yuan guided missile production plant near Peking in early November showed two new pieces of missile support equipment. A new missile transporter, larger than any previously noted in China, was identified. Also, a large new missile rail car measuring 80 feet in length was seen. In addition, large numbers of people and vehicles were visible in the plant area.



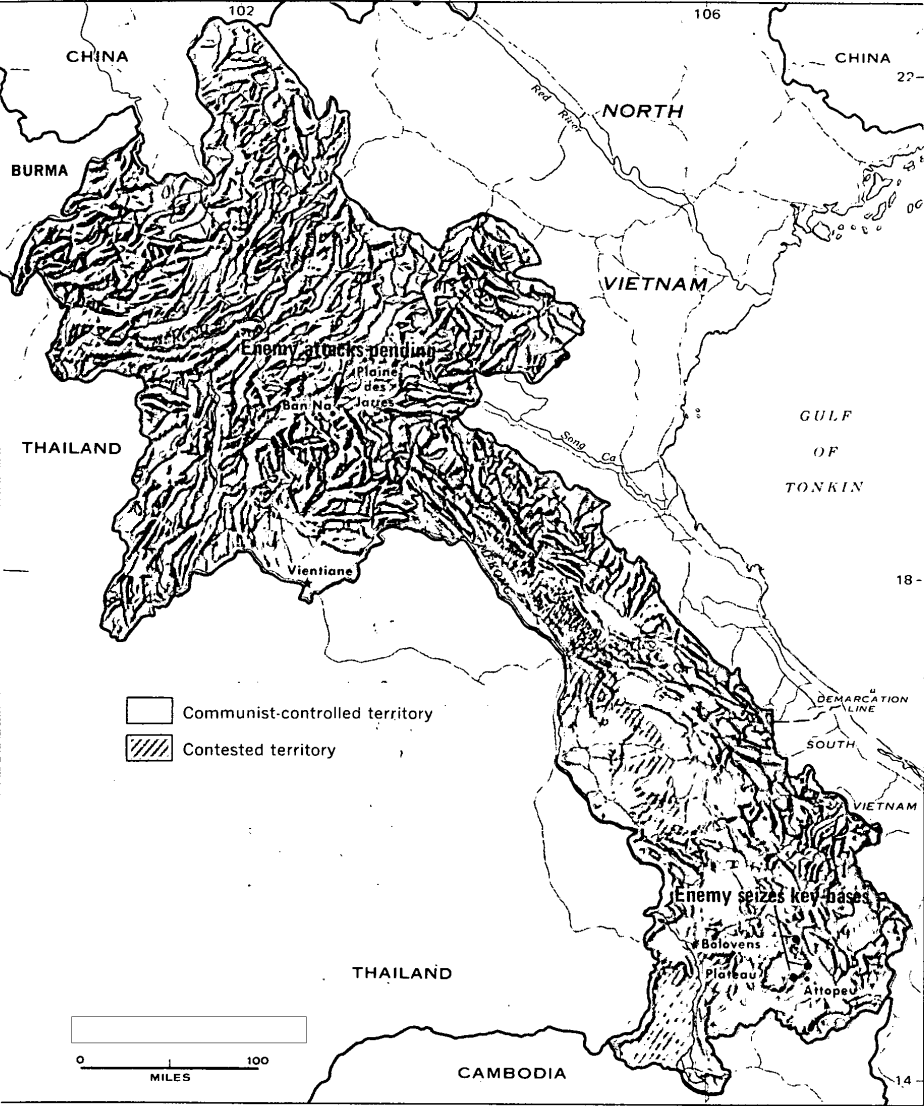
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LAOS: Current Situation



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LAOS

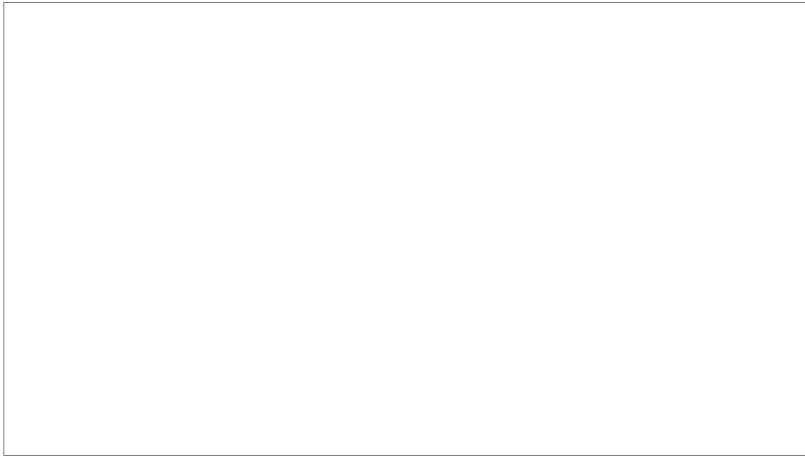
The prolonged lull in significant military activity on the Bolovens Plateau ended on 22 November as widespread attacks were made on Laotian irregular positions by an estimated four North Vietnamese battalions. The enemy succeeded in taking the two key government bases on the plateau ten miles northwest of Attapeu as well as four other outposts in the same general area. Enemy forces also seized an irregular base camp just east of the plateau about 30 miles north of Attapeu.

It is too early to tell whether the North Vietnamese intend to hold these positions. Government air strikes were directed against enemy units throughout the day on 22 November and irregular forces are in the process of regrouping for counterattacks. If the Communists succeed in consolidating their gains, the government's capacity to harass enemy supply and troop movements through this region could be imperiled.

In northern Laos evidence continues to accumulate of impending enemy attacks in the vicinity of Ban Na. Messages between elements of the North Vietnamese 316th Division have made repeated references to launching "phase two of the mission," which apparently involves thrusts toward Ban Na from the east by units of the 148th Regiment and from the north by a battalion of the 174th Regiment.

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SOUTH VIETNAM



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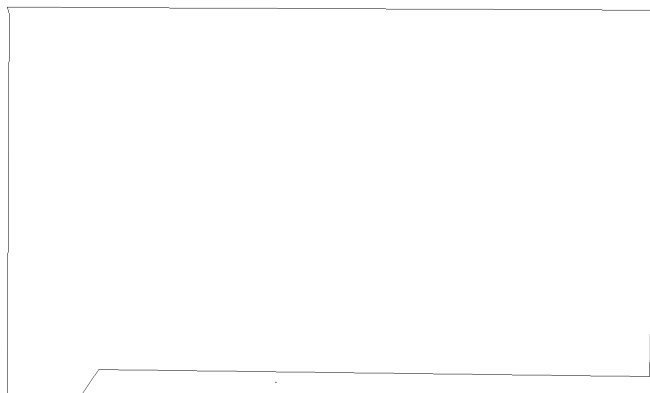
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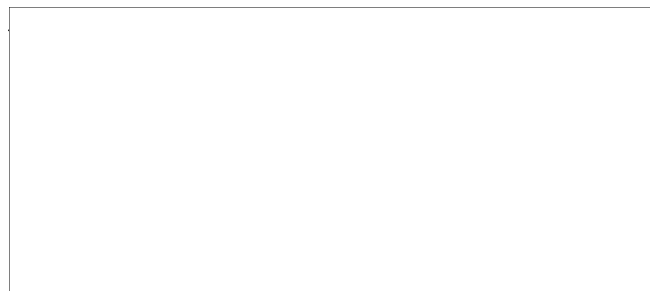
LIBYA



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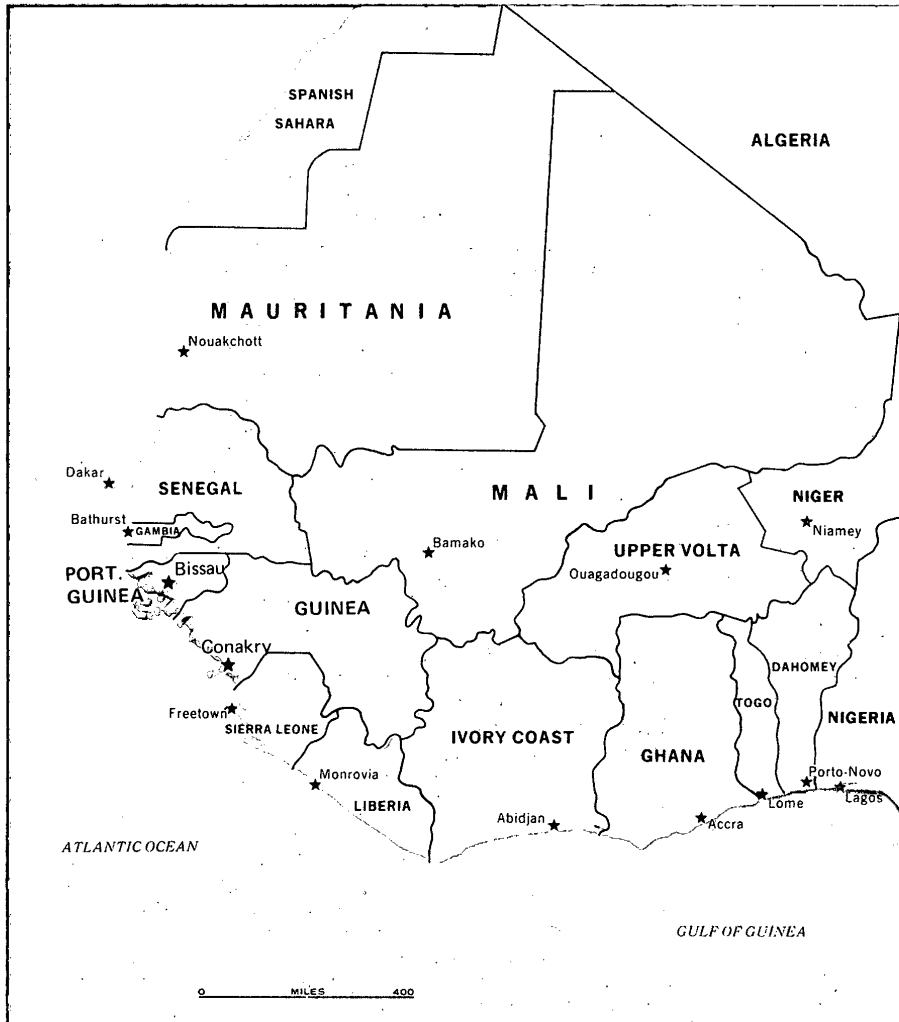


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GUINEA

The invading force that landed in Conakry yesterday--said by President Toure to consist of some 350 "European and African mercenaries"--was ferried ashore early Sunday morning from at least four unmarked vessels clearly visible from the port of Conakry. The attackers captured two military camps in the capital and inflicted heavy damage on the President's suburban compound and the headquarters of the guerrilla movement that has been operating in neighboring Portuguese Guinea. No Guinean leaders appear to have been seized or injured by the invaders and the government has retained control of the radio, which by last night was claiming that the intruders had been suppressed. Sporadic firing occurred during the night, however, and Guinean leaders expect the ships that landed the strike force to return, either to pick up the men or to land more.

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Lisbon may have hoped that an invasion would spark an internal uprising against Toure and bring to power a new government indebted to Portuguese aid. At a minimum, the Portuguese may have thought they could frighten Toure into reducing his aid to the anti-Portuguese insurgents in Portuguese Guinea.

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NOTE

West Germany: The Free Democrats (FDP) captured the required ten percent of the vote in one district in the Bavarian state elections yesterday (12.4 percent in Middle Franconia) and regained the representation in the state legislature that the party had lost in 1966. This success, on top of that in the state of Hesse two weeks ago, provides evidence that the FDP's role as junior partner in Brandt's government has won new voter support and that the decline of the party has been halted. The Social Democrats lost a few percentage points but as in Hesse they are compensated by the success of the FDP, on whom they depend for their slim Bundestag majority.

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